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Unraveling the Hidden Costs: How Cable Theft and Vandalism Fuel Soaring Energy Tariffs in Emerging Economies

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ABSTRACT

Escalating utility costs and challenging financial circumstances make it increasingly difficult for consumers to afford essential services. This financial strain also spills over into the workplace, where employees resort to pilfering company assets, resulting in significant annual losses for these utility firms. Our study aims to identify the organizational factors and individual personality traits that motivate employees to engage in cable theft and vandalism, subsequently driving up tariffs. Utilizing the frameworks of the Reasoned Action Theory (TRA) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), we seek to elucidate the underlying motivations for such theft and destruction of property. Factors such as an unsatisfactory work environment, perceived unfair treatment by management, subpar wages, and easy opportunities for theft are identified as key motivators. To effectively mitigate these issues, targeted policy measures and strategies need to be implemented to influence employee attitudes and perceptions, thereby reducing incidents of theft and vandalism.

Keywords: Emerging Economies, Energy Tariffs, Cable Theft, Vandalism, Planned Behavior, Reasoned Action, Employee Attitude
JEL Classifications: F21, F43, Q43, Q47

1. INTRODUCTION

The world is facing a multifaceted challenged when it comes to the matter of energy (Choudhury, 2023; Kayani et al., 2024; Nawaz et al., 2024; Xie et al., 2024). The existing literature has justified many reasons for increasing the prices (Haseeb, M., 2024; Kayani et al., 2024; Ullah et al., 2024). As justification for pricing rises, energy utility providers have mentioned the need to generate enough money to upgrade their infrastructure. However, cable theft and vandalism have made the sector's problems worse by resulting in significant income losses and electrical supply disruptions (Cheruto and Munene, 2019). Cable theft and vandalism have become significant problems for developing countries' power industries. The literature accounts for how they have affected the nation's social and economic structure. In addition to being an issue for energy utility providers, cable theft and vandalism also affect consumers, who eventually pay higher rates to make up for these losses. When seen from a socioeconomic angle, copper cable theft and vandalism have caused telecommunications networks to be disrupted, accidents, fatalities from electrical shocks, and burn injuries from maintaining and repairing damaged substations and copper cables (Wabukala et al., 2023).

Over the years, Pakistan's electrical industry has faced several difficulties, such as frequent power outages, insufficient supplies, and rising prices (Aysan, 2020; Hasan et al., 2022; Mabunda, 2021). However, cable theft and vandalism have made matters worse by resulting in significant financial losses and power outages. In addition to being a concern for energy utility providers, the money lost, and infrastructure damage caused by cable theft and vandalism also affect customers, who are eventually hit hardest by higher rates to make up for these losses. Because of maintenance and replacement expenditures for electrical infrastructure, including sub-stations, transformers, and copper

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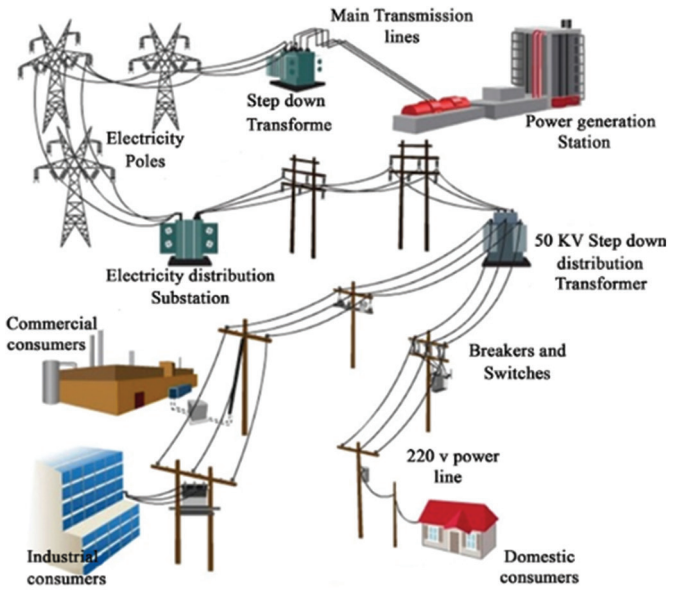
cables, power generating, transmission, and regulation institutions suffer significant losses that are well-documented in print media and literature (Ibrar et al., 2020). According to media sources, copper cable theft results in yearly revenue losses of millions of rupees for Pakistan's power utility providers. For maintenance personnel who regularly maintain these disturbed or unstable power situations, theft and vandalism of electrical equipment at electrical substations are devastating. Substations, transformers, utility lines, and underground cabling are often the main targets of cable theft and vandalism in Pakistan (Dave et al., 2019). In Pakistan, cable theft and vandalism have severe societal repercussions in addition to causing financial losses. For instance, the interruption of hospital, industrial, and home services due to cable theft has resulted in power outages that have caused deaths, production disruptions, and household activities, respectively (Mabunda, 2021). Opportunistic thieves commit these crimes and organized criminal groups, adding to the high expenses the nation could do without. With numerous incidences of cable theft and vandalism occurring in places like Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad, the severity of the cable theft issue in Pakistan's main cities is evident. For instance, the Karachi Electric Supply Corporation (KESC) in Karachi claims that copper wire theft costs them millions of rupees per year, and in other cities, the situation is similar (Aladejuyigbe and Awolusi, 2021). The theft and damage of cables by corporate personnel is a severe problem in Pakistan. Employees of Pakistani electric utility companies should be warned that such behavior might jeopardize their job. Moreover, it needs to be clarified that some workers still steel cables and damage property.

On the other hand, "Electrical power companies" (EPC) will be the owner of the transformer, which will be installed on the exterior of the courtyard and will be linked to the electricity pole in the same location. Once bringing the voltage from very high voltage to step-down to 120/240 volts for residential consumption, the step-down transformer subsequently supplies energy to the meter once the voltage has been reduced. After that, the meters everywhere around the building are used to distribute the electricity to the various outlets. A meter is a device that is owned by an electrical company and is used to power transmission within a building as well as keep a record of the amount of energy that is consumed. Figure 1 depicted the distribution network for electricity, beginning with the EPGS and ending at the individual homes. Even when the line that transfers electrical power from the meter to the panel board is placed in the courtyard or outside the home, it is still part of the electrical system. The panel board contains a variety of service circuits as well as breakers, which are responsible for controlling the flow of electrical power.

In Pakistan, cable theft and vandalism also have considerable financial repercussions, resulting in yearly losses of millions of rupees and a hike in Tariffs. Despite several public and commercial sector efforts to solve this problem, cable theft and vandalism continue to outbreak in Pakistan's electrical industry. Adopting the Pakistan Penal Code, which imposes severe penalties on thieves and consumers of stolen products, is one of the interventions (Dave et al., 2019).

Figure 1: Distribution network for electricity



Source: Hussain et al., 2016

Another is launching awareness programs to inform communities of copper cable theft's and energy theft's negative impacts. However, the company's workers' participation in cable theft and damage continues to be a perplexing occurrence (Wabukala et al., 2022). We use theories of human behavior, such as the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), to make sense of this perplexing scenario. These ideas may aid in investigating the relationships between employee attitudes toward theft and vandalism in general and theft and vandalism of copper wires. A theoretical justification and research agenda may also help create efficient solutions that deal with this problem in greater detail (Azad and Haider, 2022). Overall, this study aims to shed more light on the cable theft and damage Pakistani power company workers committed. The research aims to design efficient interventions that might lessen this issue and enhance the overall performance of the power sector in Pakistan by examining the elements that lead to employee participation in cable theft and vandalism. In 2019, power theft and unauthorized connections cost Pakistan around PKR 28.6 billion (roughly USD 187 million), according to a study by the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) (Wabukala et al., 2022). The indirect costs of power outages interrupted economic activity, and social effects are not included in this number; it solely considers the direct cash losses suffered by the power distribution companies and the increase in Tariffs which put the burden on the public at large.

Theoretical explanations and research goals may be constructed based on theories of human behavior, like the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), to address this topic thoroughly. These studies may aid in investigating the relationships between employee attitudes regarding theft and vandalism in general and theft and vandalism of copper wires in particular (Wijayasundara, 2021). This may help develop efficient remedies to lessen this issue and enhance the overall performance of Pakistan's electrical industry. In Pakistan, the issue of electricity theft is further exacerbated by cable theft. Criminals, who sell them

for a fast profit on the scrap market, often steal copper wires. This affects the power system's dependability and safety, causing direct losses to the corporations that distribute electricity (Liu et al., 2020). The earthling and grounding of the power system are impacted by copper cable theft, which may result in overvoltage and electrical fires. Additionally, power outages brought on by cable theft impair everyday life and the economy. According to a survey by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), power theft and inefficiencies in the power supply chain cost Pakistan's power industry up to PKR 480 billion (about USD 3.14 billion) yearly (Hossain et al., 2021). There are several causes for the high prevalence of power theft in the nation, including bad administration, ineffective law enforcement, corruption, and socioeconomic issues like unemployment and poverty. Vandalism and cable theft are widespread in Pakistan, not only in the electricity industry. This issue also affects the telecom industry, as criminals steal fiber optic cables and other communication equipment (Johan and Yusuf, 2022). This not only results in losses for the telecom businesses financially, but it also affects the dependability and quality of telecom services, which are crucial for contemporary business and communication operations. Cable theft and vandalism have emerged as important problems for Pakistan's power industry, resulting in significant financial losses and interruptions to energy provision. Coordinated efforts from the public and commercial sectors are needed to fully address this problem, together with theoretical justifications and research objectives that look at the causes of employee participation in cable theft and damage (Ibrar et al., 2020).

Copper cable theft and vandalism in Pakistan are significant issues, especially in urban centers like Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. The nation's electrical business has suffered significant economic and social costs due to this issue, including losses from power outages, replacement prices, and enhanced security precautions. According to a Pakistan Today article from 2019, cable theft has cost power utility firms, including Karachi Electric (KE) and Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO), up to PKR 7 billion yearly (Kambule and Nwulu, 2021). The main targets of copper cable theft are transformers, substations, and underground wiring in Pakistan. Organized criminal gangs often participate in these thefts and sell the copper wires they have taken to profitable markets. Consequently, the nation's energy business has had to contend with a number of difficulties, including interrupted or unstable power settings, which impact both criminals and the electrical maintenance employees who regularly maintain these power plants (Wijayasundara, 2021). Additionally, these crimes often endanger the lives of nearby residents and maintenance workers and may even shock or kill them. Furthermore, the danger of electrocution for children and other public members is increased in residential settings when live wires are stolen and then left exposed. Pakistan's government and electrical providers have taken several actions to combat this problem, including strengthening security, establishing public awareness programs, and collaborating with the local police force and communities (Hossain et al., 2021). These actions, however, have not been sufficient to prevent cable theft and damage completely.

On the other hand, examining the causes and factors that lead to such conduct among employees in Pakistan is crucial, given the high incidence of theft and damage committed by workers in Pakistan's electrical sector (Iwuoha, 2021). For instance, such behavior continues despite workers' complete understanding of the consequences of their employment, such as termination, pay suspension, and legal action. In order to permanently stop the widespread cable theft and vandalism jeopardizing the profitability of power-producing firms in Pakistan, it is crucial to understand how workers perceive and behave toward theft and vandalism in general (Iskander, 2021). Therefore, a conceptual model might be created to understand the root causes of cable theft and vandalism and to suggest workable remedial actions. The model might examine all the interactions between human factors (attitudes and views concerning cable theft and vandalism), organizational atmosphere (work climate), personal intents to steal and vandalize, and the actual act of theft and vandalism. The methodology could assist Pakistani power firms in understanding the fundamental causes of staff theft and vandalism and create solutions to these problems (Cuddy et al., 2022). Therefore, to lessen employee resentment and irritation, interventions might enhance the organizational atmosphere, deliver sufficient training and development opportunities, and provide equitable remuneration packages. In order to prevent theft, and vandalism, and speed up incident response, companies might spend more money on security systems and technology (Liu et al., 2020). In order to urge individuals to report suspicious activity, awareness efforts that target communities might be enhanced, and collaborations with locals could be established. The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 is about the literature review, Section 3 is about methodology, Section 4 is about conclusions and limitations and finally, section 5 is about policy recommendations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The notion of cable theft and vandalism by workers of Pakistan's power utility corporations is examined in this literature study as the attitudes and views may support these actions. This study intends to provide insights into the interactions between these factors and their influence on organizational performance by exploring the theoretical explanations and research agenda linked to this problem.

2.1. Theft and Vandalism

In recent years, there has been an increase in worry about the personnel of Pakistan's energy utility firms stealing and damaging electric lines (Cuddy et al., 2022). Understanding how cable theft, vandalism, attitudes, and perceptions interact in this occurrence requires developing a theoretical explanation and research strategy. It has been challenging and contentious to define theft and vandalism in the Pakistani context. Vandalism, the intentional demolition or defacing of a building or symbol, is often committed as a show of disrespect, inventiveness, or both. Contrarily, theft is the unlawful taking of corporate property for one's use or sale to a third party. Employees of power utility companies intentionally damaging copper wires is a kind of vandalism that demonstrates their destructiveness, ownership, and goals (Iskander, 2021). This kind of vandalism is often committed by self-conscious, rational people for various motives, such as air complaints or making money. As a result,

a little section of copper cable may be destroyed or defaced, or the whole system may be destroyed. The atmosphere for theft, or the possibility of stealing depending on an employee's mindset, ultimately drives theft by workers of energy utility companies (Cuddy et al., 2022). Employees who work in poor working circumstances may get demotivated and demoralised, which may lead to the development of the conditions and dispositions necessary for immoral social actions like stealing. Moreover, poor service quality caused slum inhabitants to stop paying their bills, load limiters and meters were circumvented or tampered with, so-called flying connections increased, and attempts to recover monthly payments failed miserably (Figure 2). The distribution business's collection attempts were resisted by locals and organised criminals, which led the corporation to retreat and let the infrastructure deteriorate to the point of failure.

The effects of cable theft and vandalism may be catastrophic for the local community and the electric utility providers. Cable damage may cause delays and interruptions in public transportation systems, negative impacts on downstream sectors and activities, commuters arriving late for work, delays in the delivery of freight, and companies running out of inventory (Shahab, 2021). These impacts may result in community dissatisfaction, resentment, complaints, threats, vehicle robberies, arson, increased vandalism, congestion, potential legal action, and even fatalities. According to Hussain et al. (2016), losses of 89.3 billion US dollars were incurred worldwide in 2015. India loses $16.2 billion annually in revenue owing to energy theft, followed by Brazil ($10.5 billion), Russia ($5.1 billion), and Pakistan ($0.89). Theft-related damages to the economy were presented in Figure 3.

To effectively design solutions to avoid or lessen this issue, a theoretical analysis of the interactions between cable theft, vandalism, attitudes, and perceptions by workers of power utility companies in Pakistan is essential. The causes of employee cable theft and vandalism, employee attitudes about these activities, and the effects of poor working conditions on employee behavior should all be the subject of further study. The study program should also concentrate on what encourages or discourages workers at energy utility firms from stealing cables and damaging property (Zuberi, 2021). Inadequate security measures, insufficient enforcement of laws and regulations, and a lack of employee responsibility are some things that might encourage theft and vandalism of cables. Effective training and communication with workers, safe and secure working environments, and rewards for good conduct are all potential factors that discourage these behaviors. The study should also investigate the efficacy of various strategies in preventing or reducing cable theft and damage by workers at power utility firms. These solutions include delivering rewards for good conduct, enhancing security measures, raising employee responsibility, and providing training programs for staff (Nazir et al., 2021).

Figure 2: The vicious cycle of deteriorating service

Source: Dave et al., 2019

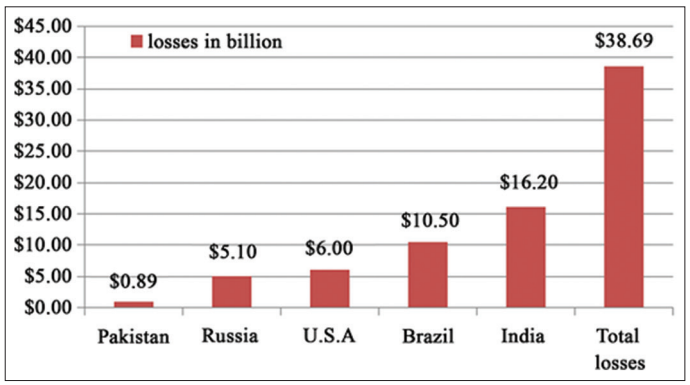
2.2. Attitude of Employees towards Cable Theft and Vandalism

Employee attitudes are important in determining how they will behave about business goals and objectives. Therefore, understanding the attitudes of workers of Pakistan's power utility companies regarding these illicit actions is crucial in the context of cable theft and vandalism. An individual's attitude is their mental or neurological state of preparedness based on past experiences, which directs or dynamically influences how they react to stimuli (Crawford, 2021). Therefore, examining how workers feel about cable theft and vandalism may shed light on their actions and eventually assist in building solutions that will effectively stop these bad habits.

2.3. Perception of Employees towards Cable Theft and Vandalism

Perception is how people organise and interpret sensory data to create meaningful experiences of the outside world. Workers' impressions of their workplace, management, and social concerns may influence their propensity towards theft and destruction of cables by workers of Pakistan's power utility firms (Boateng and Tenkorang, 2022). It is crucial to remember that impressions may differ from reality, and negative views of graffiti and cable theft may encourage these behaviors. In order to establish a study plan to address these concerns successfully, it is crucial to understand how workers perceive cable theft and vandalism.

Figure 3: Theft Related Damages: Global Data



Source: Hussain et al., 2016

2.4. Relationship between Perceptions and Attitudes

In the workplace, employee satisfaction and organisational performance are two ideas that are strongly intertwined. The degree to which workers are happy with their jobs, working circumstances, compensation, perks, and other work environment elements is referred to as employee satisfaction (Khwela, 2019). On the other hand, organisational performance refers to how well a business fulfils its targets and accomplishes its goals. Employee perceptions and attitudes have a significant impact on employee satisfaction, which has an impact on organisational performance. Employee job satisfaction may be influenced by how they see the company's rules, management style, workplace culture, and chances for professional progression. The importance of attitudes in this context must be considered since they directly impact an employee's motivation, engagement, and overall job satisfaction. For example, employees may lose interest and become unsatisfied with their work if they feel their company needs to invest in their training and development (Boateng and Tenkorang, 2022). Additionally, good attitudes about one's job and employer are linked to greater employee satisfaction levels and, as a result, improved organizational performance. An organisation that fosters a culture where workers feel appreciated and respected will probably see greater employee satisfaction and productivity.

2.5. Theoretical Framework

This paper offers a theoretical justification and research goal for cable theft and damage by workers of Pakistan's power utility firms based on the theories of reasoned action (TRA) and planned behavior (TPB) (Katushabe et al., 2022). According to the TRA and TPB, an individual's purpose to act in a certain way determines their behavior. This intention is impacted by their attitude and subjective norm (view of what they should do). This research aims to investigate how workers' views and attitudes about cable theft and vandalism affect their decision-making (Jovanović et al., 2023). The research will also use the idea of the "climate for theft," which considers the possibility of theft and perceptional organizational standards to shed light on employee theft. To comprehend cable theft and vandalism by personnel of Pakistan's energy utility firms, the research will also consider the taxonomy of vandalism behaviors, acquisitive vandalism, and spiteful vandalism. Unfavorable attitudes and views about the company might spread like a virus among workers, thereby impacting organizational performance (Nazir et al., 2021). Determining how workers feel about actions like cable theft and vandalism, which are not in the interests of utility businesses, may thus help managers encourage positive change among employees, improving organizational performance. According to the study's theoretical framework, it is crucial to understand how workers feel about cable theft and vandalism to stop these behaviors. The TRA and TPB are anticipated to give a thorough framework for comprehending cable theft and vandalism by personnel of Pakistan's power utility firms, along with the idea of a "climate for theft" and the taxonomy of vandalism behaviors (Zuberi, 2021). By examining the application of these theories in the particular situation of cable theft and vandalism by workers in Pakistan's power utility firms, the research seeks to fill a vacuum in the literature as highlighted in Table 1.

Table 1: Conceptual framework

Conceptual framework for cable theft and vandalism by employees of Pakistan's electricity utility companies	
Dependent variable	Theft and vandalism
Independent variables	Attitudes of employees, perceived behavioral control

2.6. Acquisitive Vandalism: Seeking Financial Gain

One of the primary drivers behind cable theft and vandalism by workers of power utility companies in Pakistan is acquisitive vandalism, which is defined as harming property in order to earn money or property. Employees may act this way to augment their income due to low pay and unpleasant working circumstances (Crawford, 2021). Cable replacement may be a profitable activity that starts a vicious cycle of theft and replacement that benefits the workers but costs the company money.

2.7. Vindictive Vandalism: Retaliation and Revenge

Employee theft of cables and destruction are often motivated by vindictive vandalism. It happens when a worker harbors resentment or hostility against their employer and seeks retaliation by causing property damage (Wabukala et al., 2023). Several factors might contribute to this motive, like being passed over for a promotion, not getting a planned wage boost, or feeling that the company has been treated unjustly. Once a reason has been identified, the person develops a vengeful mindset that may be further reinforced when a chance arises.

2.8. Injustice and Inadequate Working Conditions

Employees who steal and damage cables may do so because they feel their working conditions are unfair or inadequate. They could think they need to get the honor, credit, or fair treatment they deserve. Investigating employee attitudes regarding power line vandalism may provide light on some of the underlying causes of their dissatisfaction, such as low pay and unfavorable working circumstances (Azad and Haider, 2022).

2.9. Organizational Culture and Ethical Climate

An enterprise's culture and ethical atmosphere may significantly influence employee attitudes about cable theft and vandalism. As a result, resentment against the organization may grow due to a poor ethical atmosphere, and this resentment may manifest itself in harmful actions (Mabunda, 2021). In order to stop these activities, businesses need to pay more attention to their environment and culture, particularly informal and social norms about stealing.

3. METHODOLOGY

It is important to comprehend that the methodology used in this study is theoretical. The objective is to comprehend the motivations behind cable theft and damage from workers at Pakistan's power utility firms (Hossain et al., 2021). The research looks at how employees feel about these actions and how they perceive them to determine the psychological factors underlying such conduct. The purpose of this work is to use theoretical models to describe and forecast the occurrence of employee vandalism and theft of cables. The goal of theoretical research is to explain and forecast

events. This research is an example of a causal explanation, which may be general or specific. Employees' resentment regarding social circumstances and the overall work environment, which are contextual effects, may impact their mental dispositions, resulting in cable theft and vandalism (Wijayasundara, 2021). In order to explain cable theft and vandalism in the context of Pakistan's energy utility providers, the research offers theoretically verifiable hypotheses. By examining the various causes of these malpractices, the study seeks to provide suggestions for proper behavior in the workplace.

3.1. Conceptual Model for Understanding Cable Theft and Vandalism

The research aims to create a heuristic model that explains the connections between organizational factors, behavioral intentions, and actual theft and vandalism among workers. The Theories of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Theory of Planned Action (TPB) hold that action is logical and relies on an individual's interpretation of the information (Nazir et al., 2021). The model predicts that organizational variables and personal background factors would influence employee perceptions and attitudes regarding theft and vandalism in general, particularly copper theft and vandalism in particular. From the TRA and TPB perspectives, these attitudes and perceptions will, in turn, impact the choice to participate in or support the vandalism or theft of electrical copper lines, that is, the behavioral intention (Shahab, 2021). Employees who see theft and vandalism as inappropriate in all situations are predicted to condemn the theft and damage of copper wires, but those who see these actions as acceptable in certain situations would support them. While people who disapprove of theft and vandalism are likelier to report such incidents, those who believe that such behavior is sometimes justifiable may even participate in it themselves. Even if workers do not steal or damage copper wire personally, being detached from such incidents makes it more difficult for businesses to prosecute offenders (Khwela, 2019). In order to reduce the harmful impacts of vandalism, it is vital to establish the measures discussed below.

3.2. Evaluation of Contributions

Since financial motivation is one of the primary causes of cable theft and vandalism, the research hypothesizes that fair and equal compensation might dissuade front-line workers like maintenance personnel and their managers from damaging property or stealing from the business. Incentives like employee stock ownership may discourage workers from engaging in such damaging activity (Katushabe et al., 2022). When workers partially own firm property, theft, and vandalism tendencies are often reduced. Employees should be given a feeling of psychological ownership so they positively value the assets and resources of the business, which directly affect their pay. Employees may be reminded of the worth of corporate assets to their earnings, the sustainability of their employment, and general well-being via educational and social awareness campaigns regarding the contribution of company property to personal and organizational objectives (Crawford, 2021).

Employees may be able to report unethical activity. As a result, they are helping to guarantee that individuals responsible for these crimes are prosecuted (Nazir et al., 2021). Therefore, incentives like anonymous whistle-blower bonuses might be implemented to encourage reporting such offenses. In cases when the implementation of penalties is ineffectual owing to poverty and low wages, the "naming and shaming" of criminals inside the organization may also help to prevent cable theft and damage directly. Furthermore, further security improvements at substations and essential power plants would guarantee that criminals who commit crimes are caught and subjected to the full force of the law (Aladejuyigbe and Awolusi, 2021). Overall, a multi-pronged approach that includes incentives and penalties should ensure a decrease in theft and damage by own personnel. The "culture of crime" that has reportedly institutionalized itself inside public power distribution utilities cannot be contained by sanctions alone, such as dismissals, suspensions, fines, admissions of guilt, and demotions (Dave et al., 2019).

4. CONCLUSION AND STUDY LIMITATIONS

Cable theft and vandalism by power utility company personnel in Pakistan have become a serious problem that jeopardizes their capacity to remain financially viable. Due to this issue, the government is under more financial strain, causing them to redirect funds from other crucial growth sectors. This study has produced a theoretical justification for these workers' actions and a research agenda for further investigations. According to the study's preliminary model, workers' behavioral intentions to steal and damage cables are influenced by both personal and organizational variables. Employee attitudes toward theft and vandalism are influenced explicitly by organizational characteristics and how they perceive their working environment. The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) describe these activities' intended and unintended effects. The behavioral intent to steal or not to steal has apparent implications for the existence of the businesses. However, it is crucial to remember that not all Pakistani firms can use the justifications and conclusions offered in this research.

The peculiar environment of publicly-owned power utilities with little pay and incentives may explain the observed behavior. In addition, even though the researchers used theoretical rigor to comprehend the behavioral intents of workers, additional contextual factors that influence cable theft and vandalism may exist that were not examined in this study. It is essential to create a study program that investigates the particular contextual elements and individual traits that affect Pakistani workers' inclinations to commit cable theft and damage. Examining how well current laws and tactics work to stop these behaviors and suggesting fresh approaches to address the problem should also be on this agenda. A multi-pronged approach that includes equitable and balanced compensation, incentives like employee share ownership, and a sense of psychological ownership among employees to value the company's assets and resources positively is necessary to combat the problem of cable theft and vandalism. Educational and social awareness activities may also be undertaken to remind staff members of the importance of business property to individual and organizational goals. Anonymous whistleblowing can also be

encouraged and rewarded. Finally, further security improvements may be implemented to guarantee that offenders who commit these crimes are caught and subjected to the full force of the law.

5. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Theft and vandalism of copper cable and other organizational assets have become a huge concern for the relevant organizations, especially in the case of developing countries like Pakistan where electricity costs keep increasing. It takes a huge toll on the financial health and profitability of these organizations therefore it is crucial to take the necessary steps to eradicate copper theft by the employees. Therefore, managers need to devise effective behavioral strategies to influence the attitudes and perception of these employees in a positive manner.

One of the basic solutions is to implement a controlled environment to keep a check on employee behavior and actions. For instance, installation of security cameras and alarm systems can help minimize the occurrence of theft. When the management shows leniency towards such matters and does not make harsh decisions, the workforce starts slacking and feels more encouraged towards delinquent behavior. Therefore, the management should publicly call out these delinquents and take strict legal action against them. Strongly penalizing those who get caught through these systems can instill a sense of fear among other employees and will prevent them from indulging in any such activities.

In most workplaces, the employees collude among themselves and form an environment where they refrain from reporting the thieving actions of their coworkers which makes it easier for them to steal. The management should provide their employees with a safe working environment and encourage them to report such activities. The workers should be allowed to report suspicious activities anonymously so that they do not feel unsafe among their colleagues and should be rewarded so that more people feel encouraged to raise their concerns. Once reported, an active investigation should be launched against them followed by taking strict action. Moreover, workers should be made aware of the ethical concerns associated with theft and vandalism and regular awareness campaigns should be held across an organization to promote a safe and healthy work environment.

One of the most effective ways to combat delinquent employee behavior is to make sure that they are paid a competitive wage. With such rising inflation in Pakistan, it is becoming increasingly difficult for people to afford a disciplined and ethical lifestyle. If the employees are paid well enough, they will no longer feel the need to steal to fulfill their means or to vandalize organizational property out of frustration of not being paid enough. In addition, the organizations should adopt a profit and loss sharing scheme in such a manner that the employees feel encouraged to work hard towards achieving their goals. As a result, they will begin to treat the assets of a company as their own since it will play a part in determining their remuneration, hence theft and vandalism across an organization will be greatly reduced.

Many employees steal from their organizations because they want to avenge the unfair treatment that they face at the hands of their managers. Therefore, a healthier work environment needs to be established where the workforce feels that the interests of the organization are aligned with their personal interests. Employees should be treated equitably; they should be respected and appreciated for their performance. Actions like these will promote a sense of loyalty and responsibility among them for their organization and they will no longer be inclined towards criminal activities.

Overall, it is crucial for the management to realize that increased security and tracking inventory are not the only feasible solutions to combat copper cable theft and vandalism across an organization. Human behavior is what needs to be targeted; reasons behind different employee attitudes and perceptions should be learned and then the relevant strategies should be devised accordingly.

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